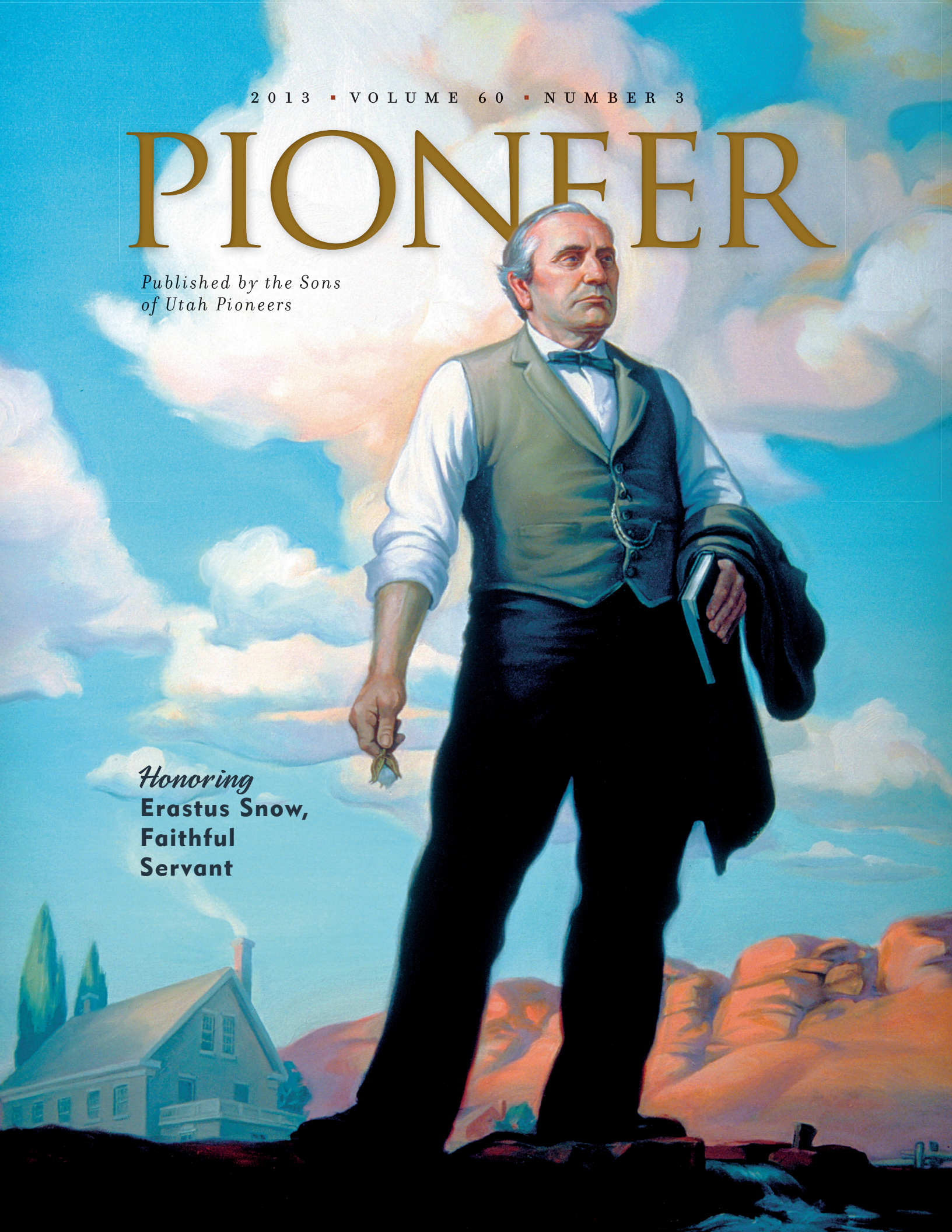


2013 ■ VOLUME 60 ■ NUMBER 3

PIONEER

*Published by the Sons
of Utah Pioneers*

Honoring
**Erastus Snow,
Faithful
Servant**



PIONEER

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Published quarterly, \$20 per year.

FINANCIAL: Linda Sorensen

MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of the National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers is to preserve the memory and heritage of the early pioneers of the Utah Territory. We honor the pioneers for their faith in God, devotion to family, loyalty to church and country, hard work and service to others, courage in adversity, personal integrity, and unyielding determination. The society also honors present-day pioneers worldwide in many walks of life who exemplify these same qualities of character. It is further intended to teach these same qualities to the youth, who will be tomorrow's pioneers.

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President's Message



BY DAVID B. WIRTHLIN

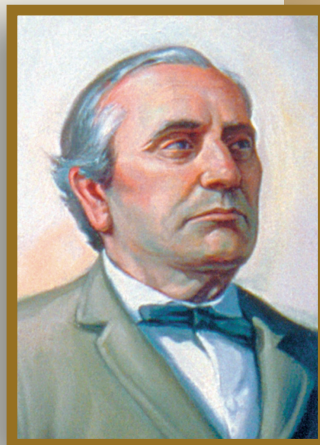
This edition of *Pioneer* magazine features a great pioneer, Erastus Snow, who was a leading colonizer of Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado. Once he heard the truth of the gospel from Orson Pratt, Erastus Snow committed his entire life to strengthen and build

Zion, whether Zion was in Kirtland, Missouri, Nauvoo, or the West. You will read of his wisdom and foresight and his deep and abiding faith in the Savior. We are grateful to Elder Steven E. Snow, Church Historian and Recorder, for providing most of the history of this great leader for this publication. I know you will enjoy reading and sharing with family and friends the many stories and life experiences of this great pioneer.

Our theme for the Sons of Utah Pioneers this year is "80 Years and Growing." This year's convention built on this theme. Approximately 200 of us gathered on the beautiful campus of BYU-Idaho and enjoyed three days filled with delightful associations, informative histories, great food, and generous hospitality provided by the Upper Snake River Valley, Eagle Rock, Pocatello, and Grove City chapters. We have a greater understanding of the faith and courage that our Idaho pioneers exercised to settle an inhospitable land of sagebrush, volcanic rock, and severe weather.

Many faithful Saints from Utah left comfortable homes to answer the call from Brigham Young to settle Idaho. They uprooted their families once again to conquer a desolate and wild land. In stark contrast, while driving into Idaho and Rexburg for the convention, we saw the verdant fields of lush crops, mile after mile, which stand as a testament of the faith and stamina of our beloved pioneers.

We have so much for which to be grateful. Simply put, we have so much! May we never take all of our many blessings today for granted, and remember, remember, that we are so blessed because of the sacrifices of our pioneer forefathers. ▣



ABOUT THE COVER

Portrait of Erastus Snow, painted by Scott Snow.

This painting was commissioned by the Snow family in 1997 as part of the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the pioneers' 1847 arrival in the Salt Lake Valley.

The Sons of Utah Pioneers would like to thank Scott Snow for generously sharing his artwork for this special issue honoring Erastus Snow. Scott is a descendant of Erastus and his fourth wife, Julia Josephine Spencer Snow. Our featured author, Elder Steven E. Snow, LDS Church Historian, is a cousin of Scott's.

Scott Snow is a graduate of Utah State University, a partner in the design firm Royter Snow Design, and a member of the New York Society of Illustrators.

Snow has been a nationally acclaimed courtroom artist for 30 years, has illustrated books and magazines for major publishers, served as chairman of Salt Lake Community College's visual art and design advisory board, and has been an illustration instructor at the University of Utah. He has received numerous awards and accolades for his work, including an ADDY in Broadcast Design.

www.scottsnowfineart.com



Erastus Snow

Faithful Servant

BY ELDER STEVEN E. SNOW

LDS Church Historian

February 14, 2013

*Men and Women of Faith
lecture series sponsored by the
Church History Library*

In my years of service as a General Authority, the most oft-asked question of me by far is, “Are you a descendant of President Lorenzo Snow?” I’m certain many of the descendants of Erastus can relate.

While they were contemporaries in Church history, Lorenzo Snow and Erastus Snow were not closely related. Their common ancestor is Richard Snow, who sailed for the New World from England in 1635. He eventually settled in Massachusetts in 1645. In the case of Lorenzo, it is necessary to go back seven generations to tie to Richard. Erastus is six generations removed from this common ancestor. So they could be described as being very distant cousins.

But in one of those amazing coincidences of Church history, they would take the stage together during the early years of the Church. Born within five years of each other, they would both join the Church in the 1830s. Erastus joined with many of his siblings in Vermont, and Lorenzo with his sibling Eliza R. Snow in Ohio. In another remarkable coincidence, they would both be called the same day in 1849 to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



and would sit next to one another in that quorum for the next 39 years. Erastus would die in 1888 and Lorenzo (though over four years older) would go on to preside over the Church from 1898 to 1901.

Each left an outstanding legacy in his own right, but those legacies intersected in an interesting way when in 1900 the residents of Sanpete County, Utah, inquired of President Lorenzo

Snow if it would be possible to rename their stake academy (Sanpete Stake Academy) after him. He consented only if his distant cousin Erastus, then deceased, could also be remembered in the name. Today, Snow College, now part of the Utah State System of Higher Education, honors the name of these two great men.

To his descendants and to students of Church history, Erastus Fairbanks Snow is remembered for

- Being one of the first to enter the Salt Lake Valley in 1847.
- Being ordained on February 12, 1849, to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.
- Opening the Scandinavia Mission in 1850 and supervising the translation of the Book of Mormon into Danish.
- Helping colonize Southern Utah, establishing St. George, and leading the Southern Utah Mission from 1861 until his death in 1888.

Early Life

Erastus Snow's life began simply enough in rural New England. He was born to Levi and Lucina Streeter Snow on November 9, 1818, in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. He was the eighth child of eleven, having six brothers and four sisters. Like most of their neighbors, the Snow family supported themselves primarily through farming, so Erastus learned early the importance of hard work. This trait, together with his Yankee practicality, would serve him well in his later years of Church service.

Erastus was 13 years old when he first heard about a new faith being taught by missionaries in the surrounding area. His older brothers, William and Zerubbabel, were living in Charleston, Vermont, when they first encountered Elders Orson Pratt and Lyman E. Johnson. Zerubbabel reported to those back home of the wonderful doctrines that were being taught and the miracle of healing he and his brother had observed.

It wasn't until later in the summer of 1832 that Erastus's family would finally be visited by the two elders. He was immediately inspired by the message and desired to be baptized. His father at first refused to give permission, but later acquiesced.



On February 3, 1833, the Snow family traveled to Charleston, Vermont, where they met Erastus's older brother William. They made their way to Lake Derby, where William and Erastus broke out a space in the ice-covered lake in order to perform the ordinance. This moment ushered in a life of service and devotion to Erastus's newfound faith.

Shortly after his 16th birthday, Erastus left for the first of what became many missions.

He cut his teeth as a missionary in fields of labor near his home in Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York during much of 1835.

In late 1835, his father, knowing of Erastus's burning desire to meet the Prophet Joseph Smith, took him aside and gave him 15 dollars to pay his passage to Kirtland, Ohio. Erastus would later record in his autobiography, "The day before I was seventeen (November 8, 1835) I left father's house, with the blessing of father and mother and the rest of my family and friends, journeying over seven hundred miles to Kirtland, Ohio, where Joseph Smith, the Prophet, then resided, and where the Saints were engaged in the building of a Temple" (*Erastus Snow Autobiography*, 2-3).

Early Days of the Church

K I R T L A N D

Erastus did in fact meet the Prophet Joseph and found his time in Kirtland to be filled with spiritual growth. He attended the Elders School and was one of the 96 elders to be organized into the first elders quorum. Later he would be called into the Second Quorum of the Seventy. He recorded in his journal, "I was one of the number which was set apart to be a special witness among the nations." It was in Kirtland that he received his patriarchal blessing from Joseph Smith Sr., the first patriarch of the Church and the father of the Prophet. In part, his blessing read, "You have desired to preach the Gospel, even when you knew it not.

Therefore, thou shalt preach it to the ends of the earth" (*Erastus Snow Journal* 1:6–7).

Erastus was present for the dedication ceremonies of the Kirtland Temple in late March 1836. Shortly thereafter he was called on another mission. The promises of his patriarchal blessing were coming to pass perhaps even sooner than he expected. He departed for western Pennsylvania on April 16, 1836. He later recorded, "I left Kirtland on foot and alone with a small valise containing a few Church works and a pair of socks, with five cents in my

pocket, being all my worldly wealth" (*Erastus Snow Autobiography*, 3).

During the course of the next two years he would be called on an additional two missions, serving in Ohio, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. He would return to Kirtland in early June of 1838 to find the community and the Church facing substantial trials and difficulties. For this reason he chose to join a company of Saints leaving for Missouri under the leadership of Apostles Orson Hyde and Heber C. Kimball.



MISSOURI

Erastus spent the following year in Far West, Missouri, doing farm work, attempting a stint at teaching school, and suffering from malaria. It was here, however, he took a most significant step in his young life. Ever the master of the understatement, he recorded in his journal, "On the 13th of December, 1838, I was married to Artimesia Beaman." He had just turned 20 years of age, and his new wife was 19.

During his time in Missouri, an incident occurred that I find too amusing to omit. In February of 1839, Erastus and five companions decided to try to visit the Prophet Joseph and the others incarcerated in Liberty, Missouri. Apparently jail policies were a bit more lax in those days, and Erastus and his friends were allowed to take the evening meal with the Prophet in the confines of Liberty Jail. It was on this very evening the prisoners attempted a jailbreak, which failed.

As a result of this aborted escape, the prisoners and their visitors faced criminal charges. Erastus felt he was in deep trouble but lacked the funds to hire an attorney. Several of the Brethren arranged to have lawyers defend them, but Erastus was unable to do so. Worried, he inquired of the Prophet what he should do.

"Plead your own case," the Prophet advised.

Erastus replied, "But I do not understand the law."

"But you do understand justice, do you not?" was Joseph's rejoinder. Erastus thought he did. "Well, then," said Joseph, with a conviction designed to toughen Erastus's

willpower and determination, "go ahead and plead for justice as hard as you can, and quote Blackstone and other authors now and then, and they will take it all for law."

As it turned out, Erastus did win his case, and afterward the other lawyers crowded around him to congratulate him and ask where he had studied law! "We have never heard a better plea," they informed him.

ILLINOIS

In April of 1839, Erastus and his family would be some of the last of the Saints to leave Missouri. They eventually found quarters in a rough-hewn log cabin in Montrose, Iowa, across the Mississippi River from Commerce, Illinois, later known as Nauvoo. Erastus had only just settled his family there before once again leaving for a mission, this time in Illinois.

This pattern would repeat itself again and again the next few years. He served a mission in 1840 to Pennsylvania and New Jersey. He returned in October of that year only to be called again to the Eastern States in November. Though this mission lasted two and a half years, he was fortunately able to have his young family accompany him for most of that time.

They returned to Nauvoo in April of 1843 and spent the next year building a house and establishing a home on the "flats" below where the temple would soon stand. It was a productive time of spiritual growth for Erastus as well. "The precious instructions which I received in the Councils of the Church during that winter and spring," he writes, "were indeed more than all I had learned before in my life."



1. Artimesia Beaman

Photos of wives courtesy Karl N. Snow Jr.

One thing we know he was taught in those councils was the principle of plural marriage. Though hard for his first wife, Artimesia, to accept, ultimately she and Erastus assented to a second wife joining the family. Minerva White was sealed to Erastus by the Prophet Joseph on April 2, 1844.

The following year Erastus would once again answer the call to serve, returning to the Eastern States in April of 1844. This mission would be cut short due to the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith at Carthage Jail.

After the death of the Prophet, the Church was adrift until the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was able to gather once more and proclaim they held the keys to preside over the Church.

Once the organization of the Church was in place, work began in earnest to complete the temple before the Saints would be required to leave Nauvoo. Erastus worked tirelessly to assist in completing the temple. This would prove to be a great spiritual boost to the members, as over 5,000 people were able to complete their temple work before beginning their long journey west.

Erastus recorded in his journal that during the last part of 1845 and the early days of 1846 he was almost exclusively involved in work in the temple. On January 23, 1846, he recorded the following: "The Spirit, Power, and Wisdom of God reigned continually in the Temple, and all felt satisfied that during the two months we occupied it in the endowment of the Saints, we were amply paid for all our labors in building it."



2. *Minerva White*



"Pioneer Courage"—life-size sculptures depict four pioneer families departing westward from Omaha in covered wagons. Created by Utah-based sculptors Blair Buswell of Highland and Ed Fraughton of South Jordan, these sculptures are located in Pioneer Courage Park in downtown Omaha, Nebraska.

WINTER QUARTERS

In February of 1846 the exodus from Nauvoo began in earnest. President Brigham Young directed Erastus Snow to provide for the immediate evacuation of his families.

The Snows struggled with the Saints across Iowa, finally reaching Mt. Pisgah, where they rested for a few days. They then pressed on to Council Bluffs, crossing the Missouri River and arriving at Cutler's Park in September.

The next several months were a time of suffering for the Saints. Exposure to the elements and disease caused many deaths. Two of Erastus's children would perish that cruel winter. Artimesia's youngest boy, Charles Henry, only two-and-a-half years old, died soon after their arrival. They buried him at Cutler's Park before moving on to Winter Quarters. Their sorrow was relieved somewhat when Minerva gave birth to a baby girl on October 1st. Sadly, the child, Mary Minerva, would not live to be a year old.

From Nauvoo to Salt Lake in the Van of the Pioneers

Original Diary of Erastus Snow, edited by his son Moroni Snow

July 21–24, 1847

Wednesday, 21st.

This morning I started on horseback. Leaving Canyon creek, I ascended westward five miles to the summit of a mountain pass, through a deep and narrow ravine, following a dry bed of a rivulet and occasionally finding a little water which, however, was soon lost beneath the soil. The pass over the summit was narrow, peaks of the mountain rising on each side for three-fourths of a mile. This pass is the only notch or opening of the mountains known

in this region of the country that is at all practicable for a road, except through the canyon down the bed of Weber river, which is very rough, and passable only in the lowest stages of water, and scarcely passable for wagons up the stream at any stage. From the summit of the pass, for the first time, I got a sight of the valley of the Utah outlet, extending from the

Utah to the Salt Lake. By the trail, it is about fifteen miles from the summit to the valley. The road down the mountain on the west side is very steep, and through a well timbered valley, chiefly of rock maple and quaking asp. A creek originates in the valley which, by the time it opens into the lake valley, becomes quite an extensive stream.

On ascending this butte we involuntarily, both at the same instant, uttered a shout of joy at finding it to be the very place of our destination, and beheld the broad bosom of the Salt Lake spreading itself before us.

Diary



I followed this creek down about seven miles, and overtook Elder Pratt just about where it enters a rocky canyon. Here we had to turn to the right and ascend a very steep hill, about three-fourths of a mile long, and descended another equally steep and long one into another ravine, equally well timbered, and supplied with a creek somewhat similar to that of the other valley. As much labor was necessary to make a passable road through the thicket and down the valley, Elder Pratt and myself left the company to perform this task, and made our way down the valley six or seven miles, and came to a small canyon just above where the creek opens into the valley of the Utah outlet. To avoid the canyon, the old pack trail crosses the creek and leads up an exceedingly steep hill on to a butte that commands the valley and view of the Salt lake. From the view we had of the valley, from the top of the mountain, we had supposed it to be only an arm of prairie extending up from the Utah valley, but on ascending this butte we involuntarily, both at the same instant, uttered a shout of joy at finding it to be the very place of our destination, and beheld the broad bosom of the Salt lake spreading itself before us. We descended a gradual slope, some four miles towards the center of the valley, and visited several small creeks flowing from the

mountains into the Utah outlet, traveled some ten or twelve miles in the valley, and returned to the company about nine o'clock in the evening, finding them about three miles from where we left them at noon, and Elders Richards and Smith, with their companies, camped half a mile above them.

Thursday, 22nd.

This morning we started again, with seven others, to explore the valley further. The company united their efforts to work a road down the creek and make their way into the valley, which was distant only about four miles. As we rode down, this morning, we dismounted and examined the small canyon, and found it practicable to make a road down the bed of the creek, through the canyon, and thus avoid the dangerous and almost impassable hill upon the other side of the precipice. We left a note upon a pole recommending it to the company who, acting upon our suggestion, made the road through the canyon, and before sunset found themselves camped upon a creek in the great valley, four miles from the canyon. Our little exploring company took down the valley a few miles towards the Salt lake, bearing a little west of north, and struck a salt marsh fed by numerous warm springs that came out of the base of the mountains on the east. Cane brake, bull rushes, and a kind of large, three-cornered grass were up to our shoulders on horseback, and the immense body of old grass

and rushes formed a bridge over the marsh over which our animals crossed without difficulty. Passing next a dry salt plain, which is evidently covered with water when the springs are flush, we came to a small lake, also fed by warm springs, which evidently spreads over the plain and marsh in the spring of the year. The largest and warmest spring we found was near the margin of this lake. It bursts from the base of a perpendicular ledge of rock about forty feet high and emits a volume of water sufficient for a mill. We had no instrument to determine the degree of temperature, but suffice it to say that it was about right for scalding hogs. . . . All these springs are very strongly impregnated with salt and sulphur and some of them with copperas and other ingredients. Finding no place equal to that east of the Utah outlet, we returned to camp that night, and the next day, Friday the 23rd, we moved north to a creek about four miles, where we commenced preparations for putting in seeds.

Saturday, 24th.

The president and all the rear of the pioneer company arrived, their health much improved. By tonight we have the creek dammed up and water turned on to our land, and several acres of potatoes and corn planted. ▣

Excerpts from *Improvement Era*, 1912, Vol. Xv. March 1912, No. 5

SALT LAKE VALLEY

Erastus, now 25 years of age, was chosen to accompany Brigham Young and the vanguard company on its journey to the Salt Lake Valley. On April 8 he bid his family farewell and began the first of many crossings of the plains.

This first journey went relatively well, and the Saints arrived in the Valley safely in late July of 1847. Erastus rode out of camp early and eventually

caught up with Elder Orson Pratt, the elder who had originally brought him the gospel some 15 years earlier. These two had the distinction of arriving first in the Salt Lake Valley on July 22, 1847.

Erastus, along with the other Saints, was extremely busy those first weeks in the Valley. He farmed, helped explore the area, and began construction of two homes for his family. He was not





3. *Elizabeth Rebecca Ashby*

to stay in Salt Lake long, however, as he returned to Winter Quarters with the company led by Brigham Young. They departed for the East at the end of August, and by October 31, 1847, Erastus was reunited with his family. Predictably, this reunion would not last long. Two months later he departed for a mission to the East. Before he left, he married his third wife, Elizabeth Rebecca Ashby, on December 19, 1847. She was 16 years of age.

Erastus returned from his mission to St. Louis in time to assist in preparations for his entire family to travel west to the Salt Lake Valley. By late September of 1848 they had reached the Old Fort and were prepared to begin their new life together as a family in the Rocky Mountains.

That first winter, the Snow family lived in the Old Fort and slept in their wagon boxes. By summer, Erastus had moved to his lot in the city and had built two rooms, one of adobe and one of logs, separated from one another with a shed. The wagon boxes continued to be used as sleeping quarters.

Much of Erastus's time was spent in church service, as he was soon called as a counselor to Charles C. Rich in the Salt Lake Stake presidency. This assignment would last but a few months, as the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was finally reorganized in February 1849 and Erastus was called as an Apostle.

Left: Orson Pratt and Erastus Snow Enter the Valley by Valoy Eaton. Above: Photo courtesy Karl N. Snow Jr.

The "Patient's" Seat

by Milton R. Hunter, *First Council of the Seventy*

Monday morning, July 26, 1847. Ten leading brethren organized in an exploring party for the purpose of visiting various points in Salt Lake and Tooele valleys.

"President Young, you are still very weak from your recent illness. You had better ride in my carriage."

"Thanks, Brother Woodruff! I think I shall. You own the best carriage in the Rocky Mountain region—since it is the only one."

After traveling about five miles northward from camp, the explorers left their vehicles and climbed to the top of a mountain. When they reached the summit of a high peak, they viewed the expansive valley below them and concluded that the spot they were on was a good place to raise an ensign. Thus they named it "Ensign Peak." Then they descended the mountain and visited the hot sulphur springs north of Salt Lake City.

"How hot do you think the water is in these springs, Brother Snow?" Heber asked.

"Not having an instrument to determine the degree of temperature, it would be folly for me to guess. But I think it would be safe to say that it is about right for scalding hogs. Here are the greatest facilities for a steam doctor I have ever seen. That stone in the center of the stream seems to say, 'This is the seat for the patient.'" Erastus replied.

"Erastus, why don't you pretend that you are the patient?" remarked Woodruff. And Erastus did. But he had little desire to remain long on the patient's seat. ▢

Milton R. Hunter, Utah, The Story of Her People (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1946), 96.

Pioneer Vignettes

Faithful Missionary

Missionary service was a hallmark of Erastus's life. He served no less than a dozen missions, adding up to more than 14 years of full-time missionary service. The calls to serve came at times that were never convenient, often in times of great personal and family hardship. He never murmured and always answered the call. The mission call that would become a highlight of his church service was the call to open the Scandinavia Mission. Despite the painful separation from his family for almost three years, the experience would remain a satisfying memory the rest of his life.

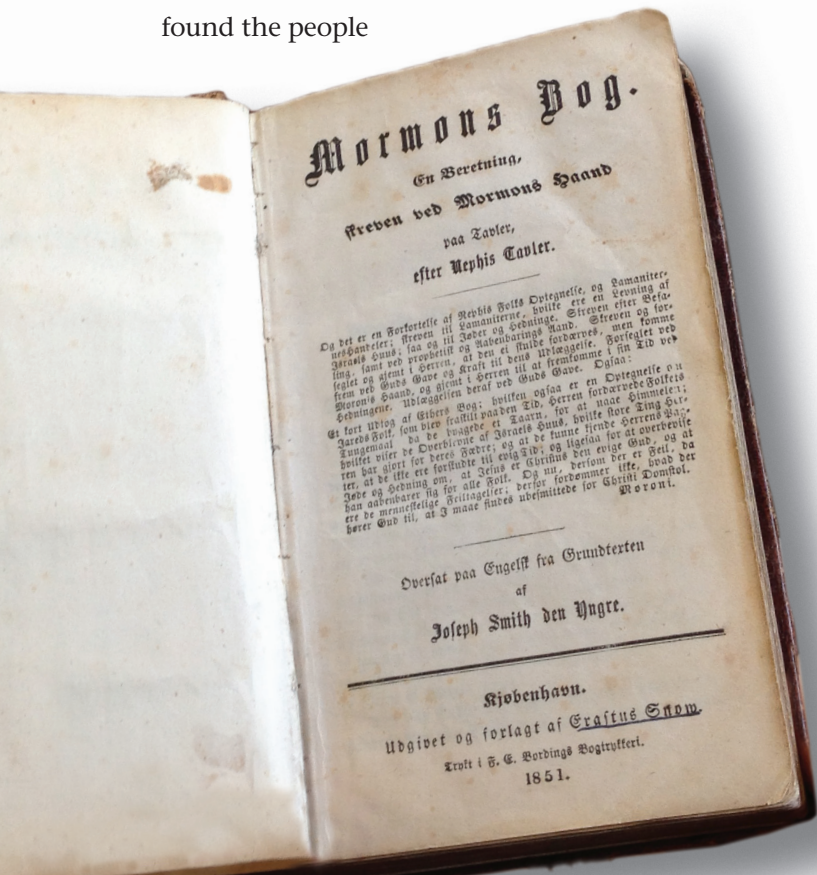
In the October 1849 general conference, Elder John Taylor was called to open a mission in France, Elder Lorenzo Snow was called to open Italy, and Elder Erastus Snow was called to open Denmark. They would all depart for their missions within three weeks of the announcement.

The Church had been established for some years in the British Isles, but this was the first serious missionary effort on the European continent and in Scandinavia. Erastus found the people

of Denmark not as prepared as those he had encountered in his stateside missions. Freedom of religion was new or nonexistent in Scandinavia, and Erastus and many of the missionaries he supervised endured many hardships and even imprisonment. Nonetheless, significant progress was achieved and the Church gained a strong foothold in that part of the world. Many of the early converts would emigrate to Utah and reinforce the young settlements throughout Zion, particularly in locales such as Sanpete County.

One of the miracles of Erastus's time in Denmark was the translation of the Book of Mormon into the Danish language. This was the first translation of the Book of Mormon into a foreign language. The first copies were printed on May 24, 1851.

While much of the work of the translation was accomplished by Peter Hansen, Erastus's Danish-speaking com-



Left: Title page of 1851 Danish Book of Mormon, courtesy Scott Snow.

Right: Erastus Snow of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and Peter O. Hansen checking proofs of the Book of Mormon in Danish. The 1851 printing was the first publication of the Book of Mormon in a language other than English. Artwork by Scott Snow.



Artwork by Scott Snow

panion from Utah, Erastus was a devoted student and within six months was speaking and writing the Danish language. He would review every page of the

translation. He did not permit the printing until he had become “sufficiently acquainted with the language . . . to detect any error in sentiment, and [had] given it

a thorough review” (Snow, *One Year in Scandinavia*, 12).

During that same year, Erastus oversaw the publication of various tracts in Danish and





4. *Julia Josephine Spencer*

had a collection of hymns compiled in the language.

It was indeed a remarkable mission full of hard work and miracles.

Many of those early Danish converts would remain Erastus's lifelong friends, and he relished visiting those who would later come to Utah.

During his absence, however, his oldest son, James, passed away at seven years of age. His wife

Artemesia also lost two of her sisters while he was away. In the depths of despair, she wrote to him on March 23, 1851: "I feel sometimes that I am left almost alone or stripped of those who are nearest and dearest to my heart. Since I parted with you, which was like tearing my heartstring almost . . . [and] not only . . . to part with my son, but the two only sisters I have in this region of country, all the relatives I have that belong to the church, I feel to say sometimes that it is hard."

Erastus would finally return to his family in Utah after being gone for almost three years. The next several months found him on various local assignments for the Church, including trips into

Scandinavian missionaries in Sweden, 1866



Southern and Central Utah for meetings and the strengthening of settlements in the area.

In April general conference of 1854, Erastus received yet another mission call that would separate him again from his family for much of the next three years. He was called to organize a stake in St. Louis and to direct all European migration to Utah. This was an assignment that would tax his organizational and financial skills to their limits.

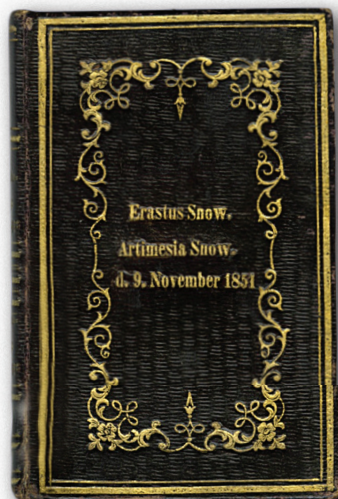
The number of converts from Europe making their way to Utah was increasing, and resources were always in short supply.

He was able to return to Utah from his mission for a short time

during the winter of 1855–56. While home, he was again busy with assignments as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve. During this time he married his fourth wife, Julia Josephine Spencer (on April 11, 1856). He would leave his growing family 11 days later and return to St. Louis. It would be more than a year before he would return home.

His return in 1857 was during a time of turmoil in Utah. Church leaders were preoccupied with the arrival of Johnston's Army and the challenges of Federal authority. Erastus engaged himself with Church and family responsibilities for the next few years.

He would respond to a call to the Eastern States in the fall of 1860. This would be his last mission call, and he returned from his labors for the last time on September 6, 1861.



Inset: 1851 Danish hymnal; Below: Copenhagen conference, 1874



Excerpts from *The Best of St. Louis Luminary*

by Susan Easton Black

The St. Louis Luminary is a key to understanding the Latter-day Saint experience at the Mississippi River from 1854 to 1855. From the first issue on Wednesday, November 22, 1854, to the last issue on Saturday, December 15, 1855, its masthead proclaimed the paper was a light shining in "darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not," a reference to the gospel being published in the Luminary in the gentile city of St. Louis.

On April 8, 1854, Erastus Snow was appointed by the First Presidency to St. Louis to "receive and take care of all Saints who shall arrive under his Presidency; counseling them as to their locations and pursuits as he shall be led by the Holy Ghost, and take the oversight and superintend the further gathering of all such as are able, and who may be deemed worthy to swell the numbers in Deseret."¹

Snow found St. Louis to be a haven, a respite for Latter-day Saints. He wrote: "St. Louis is a fine, large, and flourishing city, and has furnished employment to many hundreds and thousands of our brethren, who have here in a short time made a good outfit for the gathering places of the Saints. This city has been an asylum for our people from fifteen to twenty years. There are few public buildings of any consideration in this city that our brethren have not taken an active and prominent part in erecting and ornamenting. . . . There is probably no city in the world where the Latter-day Saints are more respected, and where they may sooner obtain an outfit for Utah than in this city."²

Snow acknowledged that "St. Louis [was] in many respects a desirable place of residence" for Mormons who ultimately wished to gather in the Rocky Mountains.³

Believing more and better communication among the Saints in St. Louis was needed, and in fulfillment of the assignment given him by Brigham Young,⁴ Snow began to search for a facility to house a newspaper and to serve as the Church's headquarters in the city. He reported to Young, "I am trying to carry out your views with regard to publishing a paper in St. Louis."⁵ Receiving a favorable response from Young, Snow made the necessary arrangements and assumed his position as editor of the *St. Louis Luminary*.

Snow wrote in the first issue of the *Luminary*, "We feel assured that the 'Saints' and lovers of truth and justice will hail with pleasure the appearance of the LUMINARY," a paper "devoted to the exposition of the favorable side of Mormonism," something the "honest inquirer" had longed to read.⁶ To him, it was the *Luminary* that would keep the St. Louis Saints focused on their membership and future trek to Zion.

Snow used the *Luminary* foremost as a religious newspaper, publishing epistles from the First Presidency, doctrinal treatises in defense of Latter-day Saint practices (especially plural marriage), and news and letters from the Salt Lake Valley before printing local news, poetry, and wise sayings. However, the paper contains valuable information that reflects the problems the Church was facing in the national press during these years, specifically on the topics of plural marriage and Utah Territory's battle for statehood.

Because of the years in which this newspaper was printed, it played a significant role in the national discussion of polygamy, which had not been publicly announced until 1852.⁷ The paper printed an unrelenting defense of polygamy against a backdrop of exaggerated reports and sensuous claims that stemmed from the halls of Congress and from eastern newspapers. Editor Erastus Snow did not hesitate to confront politician, newspaper columnist, or even the president of the United States on the issue.

Although Snow had hoped to devote his paper to "Science, Religion, General Intelligence and News of the Day,"⁸ he often used the *Luminary* to vent his monetary frustrations. He believed these financial problems would



be solved by getting more subscribers. Hoping to attract full-paying subscribers, Snow wrote enthusiastically of the publication: "From all quarters our correspondents hail the *Luminary* with joy. We wish them to use their utmost exertions to increase its circulation, and forward us all the means possible; (bills of any sound bank;) urging every friend of the cause to subscribe for as many papers as possible, that we may be enabled to meet the heavy expenses incurred by the *Luminary* in its infancy."⁹

The number of subscribers did increase, but so did Snow's financial burdens. Indebtedness and longings for family led him to write to Brigham Young on February 3, 1855, asking whether he should remain in St. Louis or travel back to Utah to attend to personal and "business affairs a few months and return again [to St. Louis] in the fall."¹⁰

By the time Snow learned that Young wished him to remain in St. Louis, it was too late. Snow had already bid farewell to the St. Louis Saints. In an article titled "Friends and Patrons," he said, "We're about to leave you! 'Tis eight months since we first made our bow and entered upon our editorial career."¹¹ Snow appointed Orson Spencer of Cincinnati as the new editor in chief.

Although there were only 52 issues of the *Luminary*, the content of the paper, especially that concerning polygamy and its effect on Latter-day Saints in the Midwest, is most interesting and informative. Latter-day Saints at the Mississippi were encouraged to muster their strength and become a buffer between national concerns over polygamy and practicing Mormons in a westward Zion—this is what makes the newspaper different from its many predecessors. The Saints needed to be armed with reason, rationale, and logic as well as the spirit to combat a nation determined to end plural marriage. The *Luminary* did much to prepare the Midwest Saints to defend their faith and, if necessary, to leave their homes to fight territorial injustice in the West. The paper is as defensive in its approach to plural marriage as it is militaristic in its stance toward government intervention in religious matters. For a people on the frontlines of verbal assault, the *Luminary* was an outlet for sharpening skills of debate and reason. The wide distribution of the paper did much to inform an outraged public of Mormon persecutions and frustrations in defending their religious practices.

1 Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and J. M. Grant, "To All to Whom this Letter Shall Come," *St. Louis Luminary*, December 23, 1854, p. 2, col. 1.

2 "The City of St. Louis," *St. Louis Luminary*, February 3, 1855, p. 2, col. 1.

3 "The City of St. Louis," p. 2, col. 2.

4 See "Twelfth General Epistle," *St. Louis Luminary*, July 21, 1855, p. 1, col. 1–p. 2, col. 1.

5 Letter from Erastus Snow to Brigham Young, October 29, 1854, as cited in Andrew Karl Larson, *Erastus Snow: The Life of a Missionary and Pioneer for the Early Mormon Church* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971), 260.

6 "Our Paper," *St. Louis Luminary*, November 22, 1854, p. 2, col. 1.

7 See Daniel Bachman and Ronald K. Esplin, "Plural Marriage," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 3:1091–95.

8 "The St. Louis Luminary," *St. Louis Luminary*, November 22, 1854, p. 1, col. 1.

9 "Summary of Local Correspondence," *St. Louis Luminary*, December 2, 1854, p. 2, col. 3.

10 Letter from Erastus Snow to Brigham Young, February 3, 1855, as cited in Larson, *Erastus Snow*, 264–65.

11 "Friends and Patrons," *St. Louis Luminary*, July 21, 1855, p. 2, col. 2.

Life in Utah's Dixie

SOUTHERN UTAH

The chapter of Erastus Snow's life after his dedicated missionary service would begin in late 1861 with a call to Southern Utah to establish the community of St. George and preside over the Southern Utah Mission. The next 27 years were principally dedicated to the colonization and settlement of Southern Utah, Southeastern Nevada, Northern and Central Arizona, and even Northern Mexico. This experience would clearly establish him as one of the great colonizers in the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The first half of Erastus's Church life had taken him away from his family for long periods of time while he served full-time missions. The last decades of his life he would be with family in his new role as colonizer. The heavy responsibilities of this assignment, however, weighed him down and caused him to travel often to outlying settlements to attend to the business and ecclesiastical affairs of the Southern Mission.



FAMILY LIFE

Erastus's role as missionary and colonizer created unique challenges in his family life. Through it all, however, his four wives—Artemesia, Minerva, Elizabeth, and Julia—carried on admirably dealing with his many absences due to ecclesiastical responsibilities. In total his wives would bear 36 children, 25 of whom would reach adulthood.

Living the “Principle” obviously was a challenge. Through the lens of today, the trials and challenges of plural marriage seem difficult to understand. The Snow family, however, was committed to the practice and always believed they were following the Prophet's directives.

Erastus often preached sermons on the importance of living the “Principle.” In a recent issue of *BYU Studies*, three articles address the percentage of polygamous households in St. George from the time of its founding until 1880 (Vol. 51, No. 4, 2012; Davis Bitton and Val Lambson, Lowell C. Bennion, and Kathryn M. Daynes).

The research in *BYU Studies* places the percentage of the population of St. George in polygamous households at just under 50 percent. It has been suggested that the faithfulness of Erastus Snow and the later construction of the St. George Temple could have been contributing factors to this high percentage.

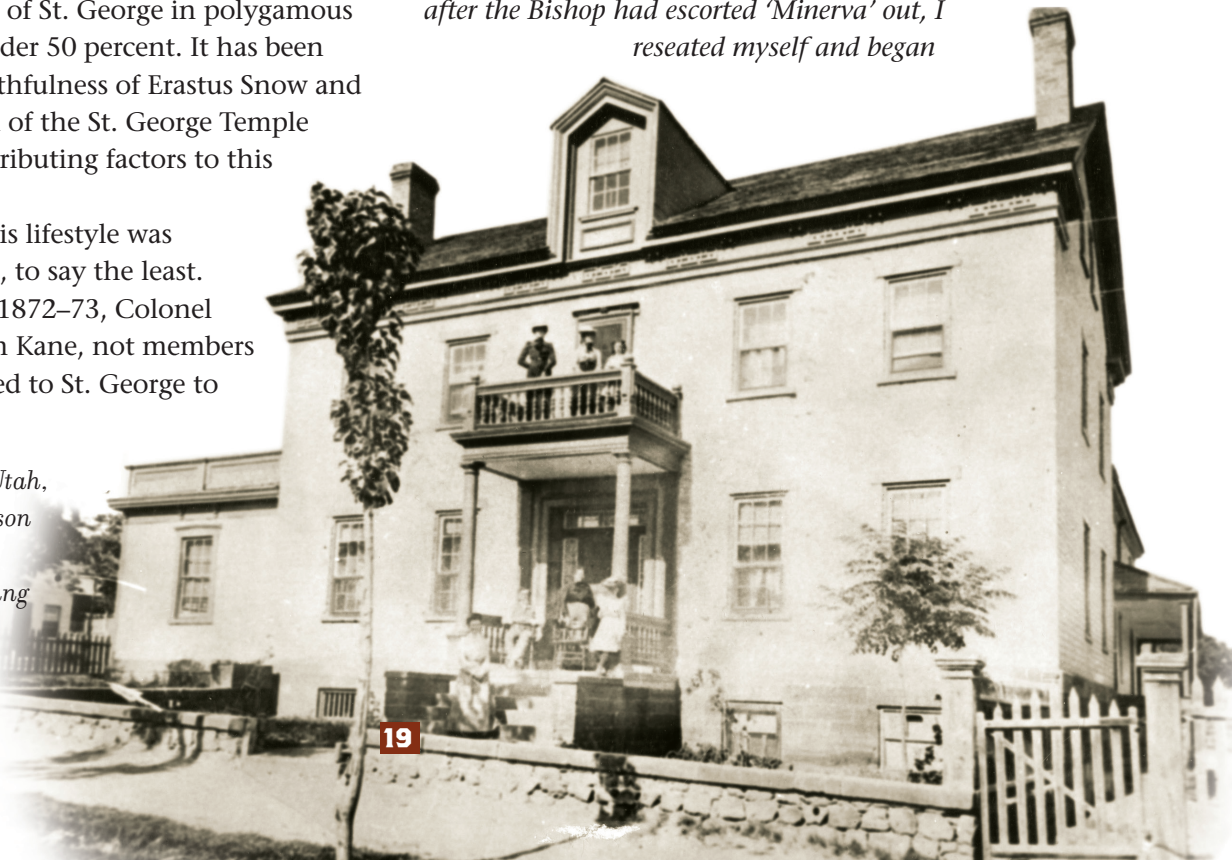
To an outsider, this lifestyle was interesting to observe, to say the least. During the winter of 1872–73, Colonel Thomas and Elizabeth Kane, not members of the Church, traveled to St. George to

spend the winter in hopes of improving Thomas's health. Colonel Kane had been a loyal friend to the Mormons, so he and his wife were hosted by Erastus Snow in the “Big House.” Elizabeth kept an excellent journal account of this visit. She describes meeting Erastus and his wives after they arrived:

“Our host [Erastus Snow] called upon me just now with his wife. We exchanged the usual commonplace remarks and they departed. In about five minutes more there was a knock at the parlor door. ‘Come in,’ I said, and my host re-entered with another lady whom he presented with grave simplicity, and in precisely the same form of words, as his wife. I am not yet used to polygamy and am always taken by surprise. Perhaps it is because the Mormons do not say ‘one of my wives’ but ‘my wife,’ still I imagine there is but one. I rallied myself, and we discoursed on the weather, our late journey, and the prospect of my liking St. George, while I secretly wondered whether Bishop Snow was remembering that I had used the same phrases in answering the same remarks a few minutes before.

“I had now seen ‘Artemesia’ and ‘Minerva’ and after the Bishop had escorted ‘Minerva’ out, I reseated myself and began

Left: View of St. George, Utah, by George Edward Anderson © L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University. Right: “Big House” photo courtesy Utah Historical Society.



talking to the children, but in two minutes more, there he was back again, this time with another lady who wore an indoors dress. She was presented with the same gravity, and we essayed the same remarks. Fortunately there was a new subject to introduce; Mrs. 'Elizabeth' is my hostess, and she had kind inquiries to make relating to our comfort. She is a gentle-looking, pale woman with dark eyes and hair, and is the mother of many of the thirty-five young Snows. When the pair rose to depart, the Bishop apologized for the infirm health of 'his wife' which would prevent Mrs. 'Julia Josephine' from paying her respects to me!" ("A Gentile Account of Life in Utah's Dixie, 1872-73," Elizabeth Kane's St. George Journal, 3-4).

Clearly, Erastus had learned the art of diplomacy while presiding over a polygamous household. The pangs of loneliness were evident in the family letters exchanged during periods of long separation.

Often Erastus's absences came rather unexpectedly because of pressing Church business. The family would "soldier on" at such times. One example was in December of 1877. On the 6th, Erastus departed St. George to attend a conference in Kanab scheduled for the 8th. While on the way, he received an urgent request from President John Taylor to come to Salt Lake immediately to attend to some urgent business involving the settlement of the estate of Brigham Young. Without returning to St. George, he left for Salt Lake after the conference in Kanab. On the 20th of December, he finally wrote to his family to explain his absence:

"I regretted the necessity of my unceremonious departure without returning home either to kiss a good bye or finish up necessary business at home, but you know such has been my life, always a minute man and never allow myself to offer excuses when my superiors call"

Inset: Erastus Snow's third wife, Elizabeth Ashby (center), and their children; courtesy Utah Historical Society.



(Letter from Erastus Snow to Elizabeth Ashby Snow, December 20, 1877).

It has been reported by family members that Erastus had a few idiosyncratic traits. During his time in St. George he was constantly approached for temporal and ecclesiastical counsel. He was consulted at home, during his meals, as he took to the streets to walk to an appointment, even in Church meetings. As leader of the entire mission, his portfolio of responsibilities included everything from struggling marriages to failing dams on the Virgin River. He never complained of such encounters or attempted to cut short those who sought counsel. As a result, he was often tardy to meetings and appointments. Therefore he became known as “the late Erastus Snow.”

The press of business also kept him preoccupied. This trait led to stories about his absent-

mindedness. A favorite was related about Erastus and Minerva, his second wife:

She and Erastus and their family were just about to kneel for family prayers, when she asked, “Mr. Snow”—she always addressed thus formally, claiming she did not like the name “Erastus”—“do you plan to attend meeting at Washington next Sunday?” He never replied but got down on his knees and went through the regular routine of family devotions. He said nothing when he got up, but proceeded with his breakfast. Knowing his ways very well, Minerva did not press him for an answer. Next day, as he arose from that morning’s prayers, he answered soberly, as if the query had just been made: “Yes, Minerva, that is my intention” (A. K. Larson, *Erastus Snow*, 605).



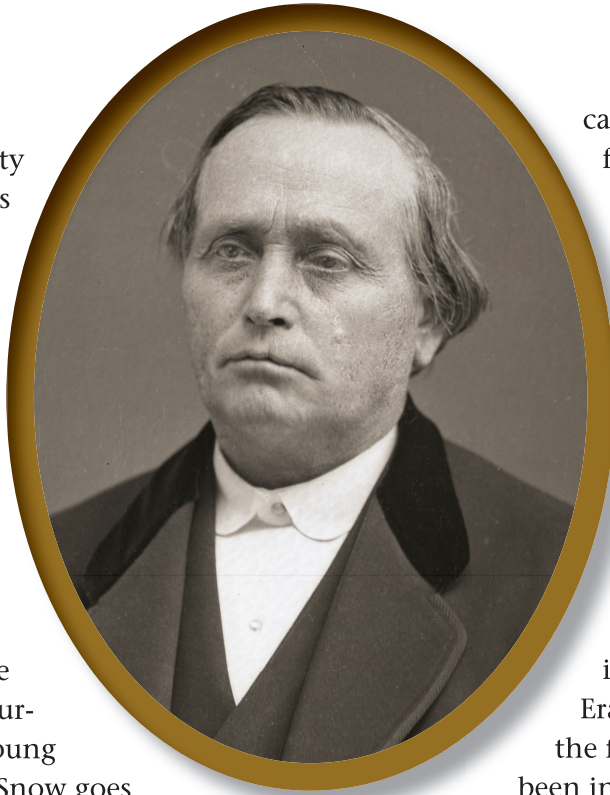
*Brigham Young's St. George
home by Al Rounds*

Humble Servant

Perhaps Erastus Snow's great faith and humility is best measured by his willingness to accept correction and even chastisement. Early on, Brigham Young recognized Erastus's great strengths and his devotion to the gospel. According to the minutes of a meeting of the Quorum of the Twelve on December 25, 1847, the Brethren were discussing possible candidates to fill the vacancies in the Quorum. During the meeting, Brigham Young proclaimed, "When Erastus Snow goes he is right. Can't be beat" (Council Meeting of Twelve, December 25, 1847).

Indeed, President Young would name Erastus to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles just over one year later. But it would be a rare Church leader in those days that did not occasionally incur the wrath of Brigham Young. Perhaps it was a weakness of Brigham, or maybe it was necessary in a time of hardship on the frontier. President Young would himself say, "I have never hurt any person any other way except with this unruly member, my tongue" (Leonard Arrington, *American Moses*, 407).

The first rebuke from Brigham occurred on the plains as the advance party of Saints headed west in 1847. They encountered large herds of buffalo on the journey, and this presented some threat to the cattle being driven by the pioneers. On this particular day, Erastus was in charge of the cattle herding detail and was negligent, allowing the



cattle to mingle with the buffalo. In the commotion that followed, Brigham Young lost a valuable spyglass, which caused him undue frustration. He lashed out at Erastus, dressing him down thoroughly. Erastus tried to defend himself, but that only brought a stronger rebuke. It made such an impression that several of the Brethren recorded the incident in their journals. Speaking of the severe reprimand, Erastus himself recorded, "It is the first I have had since I have been in this Church, which is nearly fifteen years, and I hope it may last me fifteen years to come" (*Erastus Snow Journals*, 4:11).

It didn't.

Financial challenges with the cotton factory in Washington and the difficulty in raising cotton were also a source of contention between the prophet and his Apostle. President Young had loaned the association running the cotton factory a sum of money, and Erastus and others had personally signed on the note. In spite of their best efforts, the cotton production in Southern Utah would never be profitable, making it impossible for the money to be fully repaid. This was a source of worry to Erastus and caused tension at times between the two leaders.

On another occasion, Erastus was traveling to Cedar City to attend a conference with President Young. During the trip he had an accident with his carriage and was delayed in his arrival. The meeting



Erastus Snow with Brigham Young and early Church leaders.

was nearly over when “the late Erastus Snow” walked in. President Young was clearly annoyed, no doubt believing his tardiness was caused by not leaving early enough. “Erastus,” he said crossly, “get up and preach the people to sleep.” John Henry Smith, who was with the party and who related the story to Erastus Snow’s son, said that Elder Snow arose and, without reference to President Young’s unkind remark or his trouble with the buggy, delivered one of the most wonderful sermons he had ever heard in his life (Edward H. Snow, “Sidelights: Erastus Snow in Dixie”).

Perhaps one of the most stinging rebukes came at an otherwise joyous occasion, the final dedication of the St. George Temple on April 6, 1877. Rather feeble and obviously not feeling well, President Young arose to address the Saints. Frustrated over the lack of success in St. George with the United Order and the difficulties with the cotton factory, he criticized the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, singling out Erastus Snow. According to the diary of Charles H. Walker:

“Br. Young said that the First Presidency and the Twelve had stood in the way of the People entering the United Order said that E. Snow had said that the Factory at Washington had been a curse to the community. Bro Snow spoke up saying he thot it a blessing now. Br Brigham whipped and scolded . . . almost everybody and everything” (Charles H. Walker, “Diary,” April 8, 1877).

According to Erastus’s son Edward H. Snow, these occasions of public criticism stung Erastus and tested his self-control and humility. At such times, Erastus would check his “rising resentment by walking the floor all night long, repeating to himself the scripture, ‘Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth’ (Hebrews 12:6).”

According to the biography of Erastus Snow by A. K. Larson, on one occasion:

“The worm turned. Not with angry words but with action stronger than mere words. . . . Erastus spent practically all of his time in St. George going to meetings and attending to his many church and civic duties, not to mention his numerous journeys to visit the settlements of the far-flung Southern Mission and trips to Salt Lake City to attend conferences and legislative sessions. Because of these church duties he was forced to draw upon the tithing funds for the sustenance of his family. This was a common practice in which Brother Brigham set the prime example. But in going over the tithing accounts, the President felt that Erastus was being too free with the church revenue and said as much to him, at the same time implying that Erastus should get out and work to help support his family. Erastus took the rebuke without verbal protest. . . . He did some thinking, however, and the more he thought the more unjust he felt the criticism to be. He was supposed to go to a meeting of some sort where the President was to be in attendance. Erastus did not show up. Undoubtedly everyone expected him to come a bit late, but as the minutes ticked off, there was no sign of Brother Snow. Brigham finally sent one of the brethren to get him. He found the Apostle in his working clothes loading manure at the corral. ‘Why aren’t you at the meeting?’ the brother inquired. ‘Brother Brigham wants you there.’ Erastus answered mildly enough, ‘You tell Brother Brigham that if he wants me, he knows where to find me.’ President Young came in a trice. ‘What are you doing here?’ he demanded brusquely. Erastus gave a vigorous shake of his pitchfork to free it of manure; then he said, ‘I’m doing what you said I should be doing: working to support my family.’ That ended it; there was never another remark to Erastus about using tithing funds to help care for his family” (from Harold S. Snow, Erastus Snow’s grandson).

The Legacy of

ERASTUS SNOW

Many who have studied the life of Erastus Snow view him as the greatest colonizer in all of early Mormondom, second only to Brigham Young himself.

We who grew up in Southern Utah and still have red sand in our shoes have had the privilege of viewing firsthand the results of these remarkable colonizing efforts. His influence was extensive. For almost three decades his responsibilities with the Southern Utah Mission took him from Nevada to the colonies in Juarez, Mexico. During all that time, his home was St. George, the community he helped settle and which he always felt was home.

There are a number of monuments to the Apostle Erastus Fairbanks Snow. There is a life-sized bronze statue of him on the “This Is the Place

Monument” at the head of Emigration Canyon in Salt Lake City. There is a life-sized bronze statue with Lorenzo Snow, his friend and fellow Apostle, on the campus of Snow College. He is found in the relief of a beautiful monument in Snowflake, Arizona, the town named after Erastus and Brother William J. Flake. There is a beautiful Fairbanks bust of him located in St. George on the grounds of the tabernacle.

The greatest physical monuments to Erastus, however, are two buildings. They began as public work projects intended to encourage the Saints to remain in one of the tougher, if not the toughest mission of the Church. Built at a time of great hardship, the St. George Tabernacle and St. George Temple are wonderful public monuments to the faith, courage, and devotion of these early Saints and their temporal and ecclesiastical leader, Erastus Snow.

Construction on the St. George Tabernacle began in 1863, at a time when many of the citizens of St. George barely had adequate housing for themselves. Built in New England style from the red sandstone of the local area, it still stands as one of the finest examples of early Church architecture in the entire Church.

While the Tabernacle took 13 years to complete, the Saints began meeting in the building as early as 1869, six years after construction began. A fine clock was installed in the tower in the early 1870s, allowing many for the first time to know the exact time of day. The tabernacle clock is credited with preventing many disputes over irrigation turns in the community.

Sometime after the completion of this beautiful building, it came to the attention of Erastus that Father Lawrence Scanlan, the Catholic Father in Silver Reef, desired to hold High Mass but had no place



large enough to do it. Reaching out to him, Erastus invited him to use the tabernacle and to stay in the Big House, Erastus Snow's residence, during his time in St. George. He even asked John M. McFarlane, the stake choir director, to have the choir memorize the Latin words and music of the ceremony.

So it was on May 25, 1879, that the beautiful St. George Tabernacle hosted its first Catholic High Mass.

The construction of the St. George Temple is an even more remarkable story. Brigham Young was growing older, and it was becoming apparent he would not live to see the completion of the Salt Lake Temple. While in St. George in January of 1871 he was attending a meeting with local Church leaders in the Big House. In a rather casual way, he inquired of the brethren "what they thought of building a temple in St. George" (James G. Bleak, *Annals*, bk. B, 91–92).

President Erastus Snow responded, "Glory Hallelujah!" All the brethren present were overjoyed and quite surprised their struggling outpost would even be considered for the construction of a temple.

The groundbreaking took place in November of that year, but it was over one year before the foundation was ready for construction to begin in earnest. The soft, marshy soil had made it necessary to drive tons of basalt rock into the ground to bear the weight of the structure.

Obtaining lumber and rock and organizing the crews of workmen were a complicated and trying undertaking. Foodstuffs came from all over the Territory to support the workmen. Workers came from settlements many miles away to assist in the construction. In under six years the Saints completed their temple. President Brigham Young did live to see a temple dedicated in the West. As early as January 1877, ordinances for the dead were performed for the first time in the completed basement of the temple. The temple was finally dedicated in April 1877. Brigham Young would die just a few months later.

The construction of the tabernacle and temple was a source of great satisfaction to Erastus Snow. As construction began on these buildings it was not a certainty the Southern Utah communities would

St. George Temple circa 1877



even survive. Their completion, especially the completion of the temple, ensured the Saints were there to stay.

Today these buildings stand as beautifully as they did when they were completed 135 years ago. They are monuments in the desert that will continue to celebrate the Southern Utah Saints and their leader Erastus Snow for many years to come.

Erastus Fairbanks Snow died at 69 years of age on May 27, 1888, while on a visit to Salt Lake City. Eulogies were held in Salt Lake City and in St. George. During the funeral service in Salt Lake, President John Taylor paid tribute to the Apostle: "When a man of courage was wanted to go to . . . Scandinavia, Brother Snow was called, and performed the great labor. . . . When a man who would stand by his post was wanted to go to Southern Utah, Erastus Snow was the man chosen. When, in more recent years, a man of wisdom and experience was wanted in Mexico, he was selected. He has always been with the outposts" (*Millennial Star*, 50:419, July 2, 1888).

Always faithful, always to be counted upon, always with the outposts, Erastus Snow was indeed a faithful servant. ▣

Photos courtesy of the author unless otherwise noted.

Monuments & Markers

St. George Memorial Plaza

Location: Adjacent to Zions Bank, corner of St. George Boulevard and Main Street

Sponsor: Sons of Utah Pioneers Cotton Mission Chapter and Descendants of Erastus Snow, 1994

This memorial consists of 10 individual plaques installed in the plaza surrounding Zions Bank. Each plaque is mounted in native sandstone and depicts various homes and sites in the downtown area of historical significance. The plaza also includes several additional sculptures and beautiful landscaping.

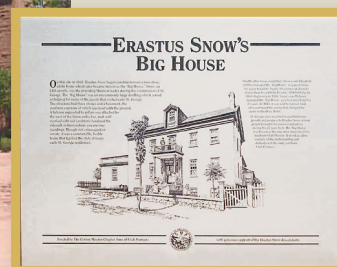
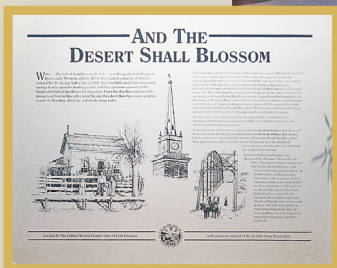


Erastus Snow's "Big House"

Location: St. George Memorial Plaza

In 1887, Erastus Snow began construction on a four-story adobe home that later became known as the "Big House." The "Big House" was an uncommonly large dwelling and served as lodging for many of the guests that visited early St. George.

The structure had three stories and a basement, the southern expose of which was level with the ground. A balcony supported by pillars was attached to the west of the home, and a low rock wall overlayed with red sandstone bordered the sidewalk. Though not extravagant or ornate, the



house was a comfortable, liveable home that typified the style of many early St. George residences.

Shortly after it was completed, Snow's wife Elizabeth (Libby) managed the "Big House" as a guest home for weary travelers. Nearly 80 visitors [came] to celebrate Erastus's 50th birthday in 1868. Beginning in 1888 for 25 years, Snow's son Mahonri managed the "Big House" as a first-class hotel.

In 1913, it was sold to Samuel Judd, who continued the service but changed the name to the Dixie Hotel. St. George owes much of its establishment, growth, and progress to Erastus Snow, whom people looked to for counsel and advice during his 27 years there. His "Big House" was known as the executive mansion of the Southern Utah Mission. It stood as a fine example of the craftsmanship and dedication of the early Southern Utah pioneers.



See <http://wchsutah.org/businesses/big-house.php>



Lorenzo and Erastus Snow sculpture

Location: Karen H. Huntsman Library on the Snow College campus in Ephraim, Utah.

Dedicated on November 1, 2010, the \$18 million, 72,000 square foot library was completed in August 2010. Jon M. and Karen H. Huntsman donated \$2 million for the construction of the facility, which is equipped with new technology and multiple study rooms. Heritage Plaza, between the Noyes and Huntsman buildings, highlights a 12-foot bronze statue of Lorenzo and Erastus Snow, the college's namesakes. The sculpture was created by Snow College art professor Brad Taggart.

See <http://www.snow.edu/pr/09/020309.html> and <http://www.snow.edu/pr/10/110110.html>

Bust of Erastus Snow

Location: Near 18 South Main St., St. George

Inscription reads:

**Missionary,
Founder of
St. George,
President of the
Cotton Mission**

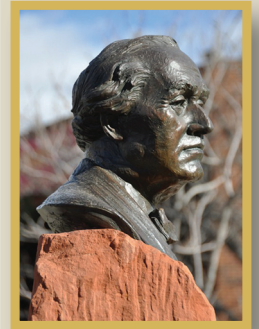
Erastus

Snow was born in St. Johnsbury, Vermont, in 1818. He entered the Salt Lake Valley on July 21, 1847, in advance of the first company of Mormon pioneers. He was ordained an Apostle at the age of 30. As a missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he crossed the Great Plains seven times and published the first foreign translation of the Book of Mormon in Denmark in 1850. Elder Snow presided over the Cotton Mission from 1861 to 1888 and supervised the construction of the St. George Temple and Tabernacle.

This monument is dedicated to Elder Snow's leadership and the great sacrifice of the Cotton Mission Pioneers.
May 24, 1997

Photo by Bill Kirchner of Tucson, Arizona, at <http://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=59168>

Top image at http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WM53BR_Erastus_Fairbanks_Snow_St_George_Utah



NEPHI, March 6th, 1868.

Editor Deseret News:—Dear Bro.,—Having a few leisure moments, I improve them by writing you a few lines.

On Monday, the 2d inst., I left home in company with Elder Erastus Snow, for a tour to "Dixie." Drove to Milo Andrus', where we were kindly entertained for the night.

On Tuesday, 3d inst., drove to Provo, where we arrived quite late, the roads being very bad. At American Fork and Battle Creek we noticed that the people were working some in their gardens, and saw one or two plows running, and were reminded in several ways that seed time is at hand.

Wednesday, 4th inst., we called on President Young, and were (as usual) a little late, the President was in his carriage about starting down to Bro. Madsen's fishery, at the mouth of Provo river. We found Bro. M. a whole-souled, big-hearted patriarch, though not very old. His family are all workers, and everything around the place indicated thrift. He told us that during the past winter, himself and family had manufactured seines, nets, lines, and other implements which would have cost, had he purchased them, not less than five hundred dollars. He had raised the flax, dressed it himself, and others of his family had carded and spun the twine, and he had knit his seines during winter evenings. He also told us that he had three years' bread-stuff on hand. After drinking a glass of Danish beer (very mild drink) we took our leave of this truly enterprising man, and returned to Provo city.

After dinner, we drove to Spanish Fork, where we stayed all night. In the evening we attended a lecture in the schoolhouse. Bro. W. D. Jones was the lecturer. Subject—"The manufacture of iron and its uses." The lecturer handled his subject very well, for a new beginner. After the lecture, Bro.

Snow was requested by Bishop Thurber to make some remarks, which he did to the joy of all present. His subject was the union of the Saints, and the necessity of sustaining ourselves. He urged upon the Saints the importance of sowing the usual (or even greater) amount of grain, and not to be frightened at the prospect of grasshoppers; for if we do not sow, we cannot expect to reap.

Thursday 5th, we started from Spanish Fork, about 10 o'clock, and drove over to Spring Lake Villa, where we took dinner with our enterprising friend Benj. F. Johnson. In the afternoon, drove to Mona, (What's in a name?) where we stopped over night, being kindly entertained by Bro. Ed. Kay.

In the evening meeting was held, Bro. Snow and myself speaking. This place, (Mona,) is capable of being made into a very pretty little town. The new town being laid out on a high, gravelly ridge, with plenty of water, and near the base of the mountain, will make it a good fruit growing spot. And as the settlement has plenty of hay land, and a good range for stock, we may reasonably expect to see a flourishing place in a few years.

This morning snow covered the earth to the depth of three or four inches. We drove over to Nephi, where we will remain till to-morrow. The people in this place are somewhat nervous in regard to the grasshoppers, but the Bishop says they will sow most of their land notwithstanding.

This is an enterprising place, and though only two years since I was last here, yet I see many and marked improvements. Four good schools are kept here, and what is best, all are taught by our own teachers. There is a manifest improvement in the great work of Education.

Your Brother in the Gospel,

JOS. W. YOUNG.

Erastus and His Buggy

Erastus Snow spent the last part of his life as a colonizer, second only to Brigham Young himself. The impact of his influence in settling southern Utah, southeastern Nevada, north and central Arizona, and northern Mexico remains today in the names of some of the communities in these areas.

A new pioneer settlement was begun in 1878 when William J. Flake led five families, their wagons, and livestock into a valley in northern Arizona on Silver Creek. Lucy Flake described the scene as a "beautiful place" with "clear water" and "hills covered with green grass." Within weeks, destitute families began drifting in. Friends and strangers shared the small four-room adobe home sold to Flake with the land, and they worked to harvest the crops on the newly purchase ranch.

A trailside meeting in September of 1878 resulted in the naming of the settlement. William J. Flake and part of his family were traveling north in a wagon to sell wool

and purchase Utah cattle. Near what is now Winslow, they crossed paths with the buggy of Erastus Snow.

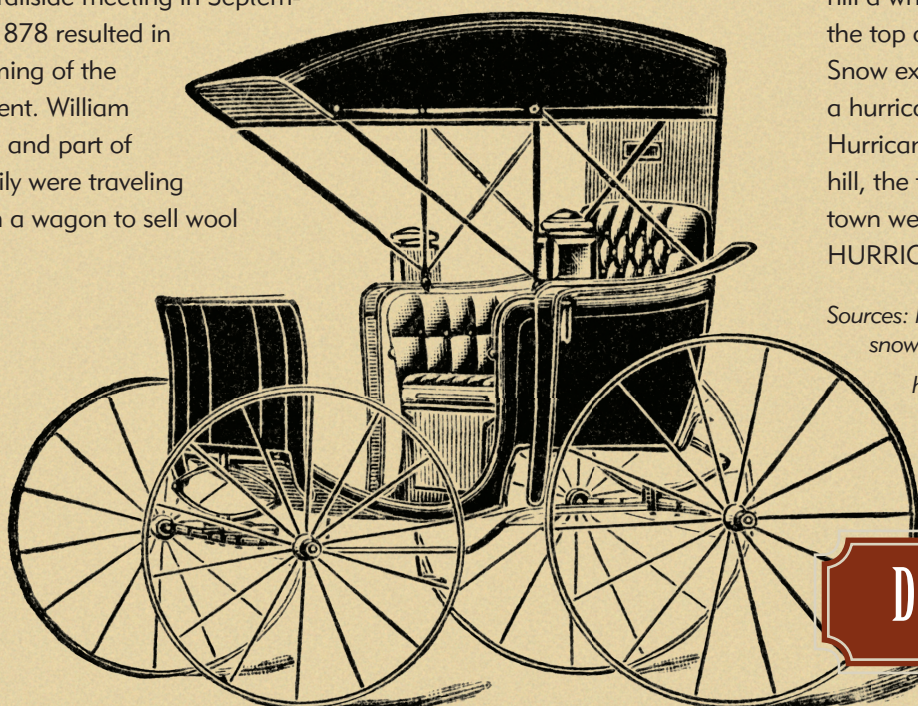
Flake gave an accounting to Elder Snow of failed attempts to establish settlements along the Little Colorado River. After enduring much hardship and the death of a young son, Flake sought a better site and purchased the cattle ranch on Silver Creek.

After hearing Flake's report, Elder Snow praised him for his efforts. He suggested they name the growing settlement "Snow-Flake," and plans were made to establish a permanent town. Following their meeting, Snow and his traveling companions, Ira Hinckley and Jesse N. Smith, visited Flake's ranch and helped survey and lay out the townsite.

Erastus Snow's buggy figures into the naming of another place, this one in southern Utah near the Virgin River. Sometime during the 1860s, Erastus Snow and John M. McFarlane, pioneer surveyor, conducted a survey to determine the feasibility of water out of the Virgin River to nearby bench areas. Shortly after this survey, Erastus Snow and David H. Cannon, with mules and buggy, traveled via the Virgin to do some more exploring. Snow and Cannon asked Nephi Johnson if it was possible to get over a hill (now known as Hurricane Fault) with their buggy so they wouldn't have to backtrack. Johnson thought that with ropes and horses the light buggy could be let down over the trail that existed down the steep hillside. They accomplished this task, and when at the bottom of the hill a whirlwind developed and tore the top of the buggy off, Erastus Snow exclaimed, "Well, that was a hurricane! We'll call this place Hurricane Hill." And so it was, the hill, the fault, the bench, canal, and town were subsequently named HURRICANE. ▣

Sources: <http://www.jerrystewart.org/snowflakeaz/history.html>

<http://www.southernutahhistory.com/history>



Deseret Views

Unknown Sermon

by Erastus Snow

October 7, 1866

Recorded in shorthand by George D. Watt in 1866. Transcribed by LaJean Purcell Carruth as part of the Lost Sermons project, Church History Library, March 2008.

Excerpts include an account of when Erastus first learned of the Book of Mormon; Oliver Cowdery and Lyman Johnson calling on his family; Erastus's conversion to Mormonism and his testimony (for the complete transcribed sermon, visit <http://eadview.lds.org/find-ingaid/viewer?pid=IE1771998>). See more of the Lost Sermons project at <http://history.lds.org/lost-sermons>.

Sunday Gen. Con. Oct 7th 1866.

Erastus Snow.

It has ever been more than my meat and drink to hear the word of the Lord the testimony put forth by his servants in the spirit of faith. . . . I was about 13 years of age in the northern part of the state of Vermont, which is my native place, when I first heard a vague rumor of a golden Bible found somewhere in the state of New York. The rumor I afterwards learned got started in the country through a visit of old Father Johnson, the father of Luke and Lyman Johnson, who had made a visit with his wife to some relatives in that state and who had seen the Prophet Joseph and the Book of Mormon. This was in the spring [of 18]31 I think or '32. We heard no particulars, nothing different. It was a curious story which nevertheless wakened reflections to this in our hearts. . . .

Months later we heard of a couple of men preaching the doctrine of the golden Bible at a distance. We sent messengers to them for them to come our way where they would find us and invited them to call at my father's house. . . . A short time after, Orson Pratt and Lyman E. Johnson made their appearance, having by some means received our message and called upon us. I believe

this was the first mission that Orson Pratt and Lyman Johnson had taken together in the eastern country. I was about 13 years of age. My father's family and my kindred were mostly in favor of the Methodist church. . . . Our minds had been opened to search the scriptures and we had been taught to believe them, and although I was young, my mind had been led to peruse the scriptures and my heart in consequence to seek after the Lord and to pray to him and to seek for the light of the gospel. But there was nothing that suited us in what we saw from Methodism or any of the sects around us. We were anxious to hear what this new doctrine was that had been just wafted to us upon the breeze.

The Lord sent unto us Orson Pratt and Lyman Johnson, who bore testimony unto us of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and laying the foundation of this church. It was then about two years from its organization. . . . Orson Pratt talked . . . and read some manuscript extracts of revelations given by the Prophet Joseph Smith concerning the organization of the church, building up of Zion, gather of the saints, etc. [He] taught us the first principles of the gospel as laid down in the Book of Mormon and in the New Testament.

Here is where I first heard the outlines of the doctrine of Christ as taught by the Latter-day Saints of the first visions . . . and the testimony pertaining to this work. . . . I felt the spirit of the Lord and as I had never felt before resting upon me to bear witness to the things that were spoken by these men. . . . At the time it was something new to me that it was in me like a consuming fire to the crown of my head, souls of feet causing every hair to stand on end. . . . I felt that I could bear witness of the same that I knew it was true and was the word of the Lord and that they were messengers of heaven bringing us the truth to hear . . .

that the Lord had commenced a work on the earth such as I had read of in the New Testament and ventured to lay the foundation of the church that kingdom on the earth with prophets and apostles and gift of the Holy Ghost.

I felt then the testimony within me of the truth of these things that they testified of as clearly as I comprehended the light of the sun shining at noonday. Nevertheless as I said oft times since [I] felt that same spirit resting upon me in preaching and ministering and while performing the various duties I have been called upon to perform in this church and kingdom. I know not that I ever felt any better assurances from that time until this as I did on that first time of the truth of this work. I felt I knew it to be true then, and I have had the same testimony dwelling in me from that time until this and manifested on many occasions. . . . I used to sit to listen and say in my heart, “oh that it would be privilege to occupy such a place as he occupies and be able to bear witness as he bears witness and explain that explanation and testify and preach the truth to the children of men as he does, and if the Lord should give me that privilege and open my mouth and enlighten my understanding and give me words and ability to bear witness to the people”—it was the greatest desire that I could conceive of . . . only the hour . . . after I was baptized from that time until this I have continued to bear witness and in my travels and many ministries both in my . . . individual state and adjoining states of New England and the eastern states on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains as well as in various countries. . . .

I embraced this gospel and began to minister in my native state and began to travel in the neighborhood round about and began to preach and baptize. A revelation came forth for the gathering together of the strength of the Lord’s house and go up to redeem Zion. . . . Two of my brothers and my brethren-in-law responded with others to this call. One fourth of Kirtland were organized in Zion’s Camp [and] journeyed up to Missouri.

I remember well the feelings that occupied me at that time, though my father had not embraced the gospel. Though he was kind in his feelings towards this people, his understanding was not

enlightened sufficient to lay hold on the . . . good as his family had done. I was about 15. I pled with my older brothers to use their influence with him to be permitted to accompany them. It was not granted. It pleased the Lord for me to remain and continue my labors in the country round about as opportunity offered me, and while laboring with my father on his farm I embraced every opportunity to go into the surrounding neighborhood to preach, testify, and baptize until I was 17 years of age. . . .

When I came into the house [or] into the field, I carried my Bible, Book of Mormon, and some of revelations in my pocket, and when I was a moment at ease from my labors [I] engaged in reading my book. . . . My father seeing this continual desire of my heart consented to release me from my labors and let me go. . . . The day before I was 17 years of age, I obtained the desire of my heart, which was unceasing since [I] heard the fulness of [the] gospel preached by Orson Pratt.

As soon as I obtained this release I started for Kirtland, Ohio . . . and was present during the . . . spring of ’36 when the temple [was] dedicated to the Lord and the elders of Israel received their . . . ordinances in the house of the Lord. . . . [I] was set apart then as member of the 70 and in the following spring started without purse or scrip to preach the gospel in states of Pennsylvania and Ohio and continued my labors in [the] eastern country, returning to Kirtland in winter to attend school [and] traveling in summer until the prophet removed from Kirtland to Missouri.

I journeyed over Missouri with the other elders in the summer of ’37 and was in the midst of this people at the time of the persecutions of the saints in Missouri and the incarceration of [the] prophet in prison and finally [the] expulsion of the saints from that state.

Then . . . fleeing to the state of Illinois, . . . the Lord opened the way for us, the prophet, and the headquarters of the saints and [the] church in Nauvoo. . . . From that time until this I have witnessed the labors and the travails of this church, their persecution, their journeyings . . . and the opposition they have encountered from their enemies. ▢

Note: Spelling and punctuation have been modernized.

The Idaho Chapters of the S.U.P., led by Convention Chairman Dee Risenmay and his team of experienced S.U.P. leadership, carried out a wonderful Convention for the membership August 22–24. The event celebrated the history of eastern Idaho and the pioneers who settled there 130 years ago, as well as entertaining the attendees in style and conducting the annual business of the National Sons of Utah Pioneers organization.

The three-day program began with a fine dinner at the BYU–Idaho Manwaring Center, followed by an inspiring filmed presentation of the historical and cultural program presented at the time of the Rexburg Temple dedication. It was a joy to see the youth of the eastern Idaho area joined in song and dance to tell the history of the settling and growth of the area.

On Friday the traditional treks were held, with members having a choice of four excellent tours. One option was the tour explaining the history and technology of the potato farming industry in Idaho. Another tour traveled to the Idaho National Laboratories to learn of the development of electrical power generation from nuclear energy. A large group of members toured the historical LDS settlements in the beautiful Teton Valley area of eastern Idaho, and still another group traveled to the restored Chesterfield community to learn of the interesting pioneer efforts in that area of southern Idaho.

Saturday the convention got down to business. National President David Wirthlin spoke to the members in the business meeting about the many successes of the past year, including the financial stability of the national organization and positive membership growth. He talked about the importance of the Legacy



Fund Drive, now completed, and the improvements made to the national Headquarters Building in Salt Lake City as a result of the fund drive. He explained one of the key events of the year was the S.U.P. Day at Heritage Park in Salt Lake City, free to S.U.P. members and their families. This event was the result of the challenge given to President Wirthlin and Heritage Park Director Ellis Ivory by Elder Russell M. Ballard to attract younger men to join the S.U.P. Over 1,600 people attended the event on July 29, where they were also privileged to hear Elder Quentin L. Cook speak to the audience about remembering their pioneer heritage. An important outgrowth of the Park Day initiative was the new S.U.P. Friends and Family Membership Program for new members to get a taste of the S.U.P. experience for the first time.

President-elect Bob Folkman spoke of expanding the S.U.P. experience by holding regional symposiums modeled after the



Rexburg Temple; photo at <http://en.wikipedia.org>



Rexburg Tabernacle; photo at <http://commons.wikimedia.org>

annual historical symposium at the Headquarters Building. Goals are to have such events in St. George and Idaho Falls during 2014. He also praised past President Dick Christiansen and President Wirthlin for their work on stabilizing S.U.P. finances by establishing and sticking to efficient budgets, as well as leading the two-year Legacy Fund Drive.

Keynote speaker at the business meeting was Elder Sheldon Child, Area Vice President of the S.U.P. and emeritus member of the Quorum of Seventy. He spoke about three dimensions of the mission of the S.U.P.: remembering the pioneers of the past, recognizing the pioneers of today, and focusing on teaching the pioneer values to our young people. He recalled the challenges his pioneer great-grandfather faced and overcame and also told the story of a West African LDS modern pioneer who set an inspiring example.

In the elections segment of the meeting, the National Nominating Committee presented candidate Tom Alexander and called for other nominations from the floor. When none were received, Tom was unanimously and enthusiastically elected as 2014 President-elect. See the accompanying brief biography for more information about the newest member of the S.U.P. Executive Council.

At the closing banquet, BYU-Idaho administrator Henry J. Eyring explained that the Rexburg institution is pioneering new ways

to provide a quality and efficient education to students in the new century. He traced the beginnings of the unique BYU-Idaho educational initiatives to President Gordon B. Hinckley's first guidelines when Ricks College began the transition to a four-year college and he credited other leaders including current BYU-I President Kim B. Clark, for the remarkable growth and educational leadership of the school.

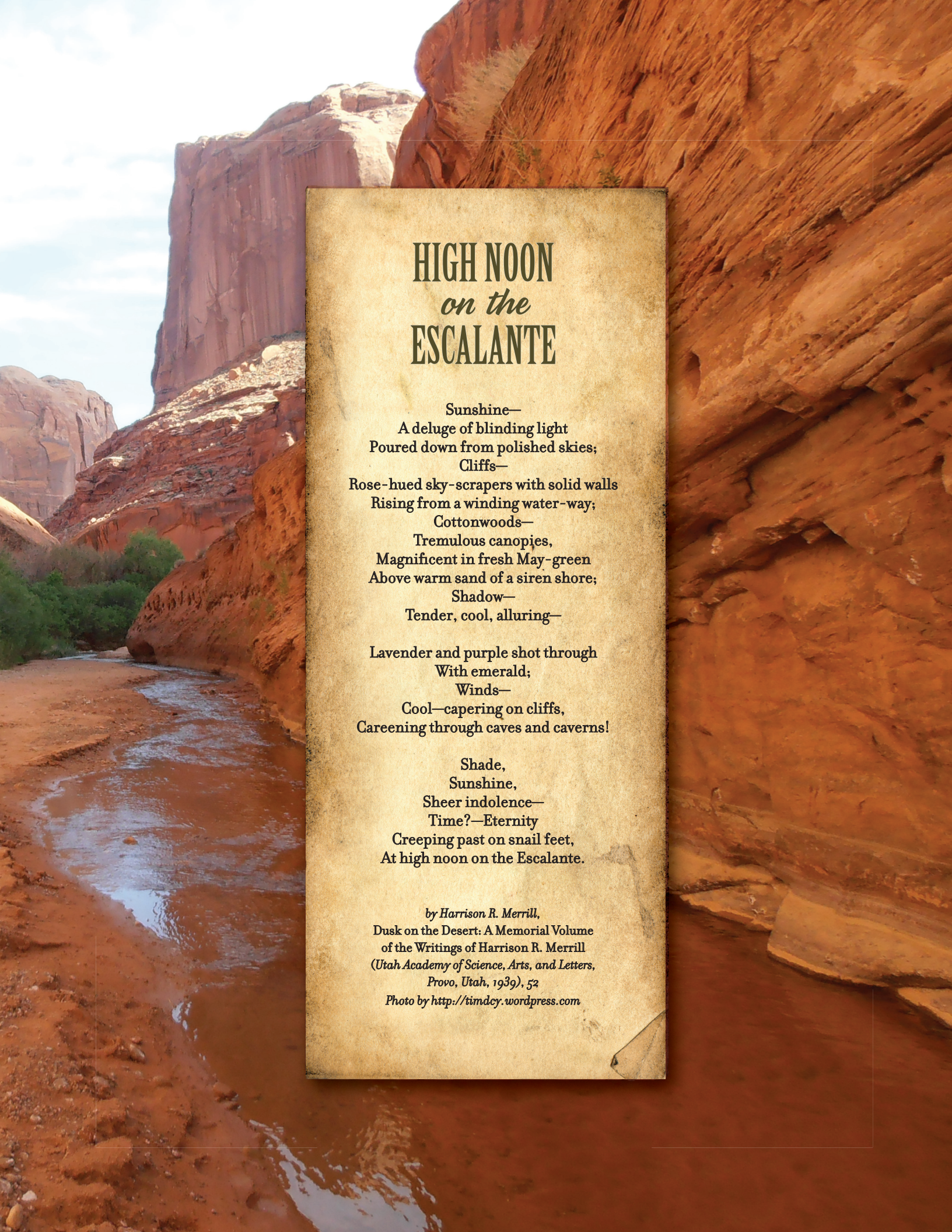
The convention closed with a video invitation to attend the 2014 gathering to be held in Kanab, Utah.

PRESIDENT-ELECT THOMAS G. ALEXANDER

Thomas G. Alexander served in 2012 as the President of the Brigham Young Chapter of the S.U.P. in Provo, during which time the chapter conducted the successful annual S.U.P. national convention in Utah County.



He is a past president of the Mormon History Association and is a retired professor of history at Brigham Young University. After his retirement in 2004, he served an LDS Church Educational System Mission in Berlin, Germany, with his wife, Marilyn. A native of Ogden, Utah, he has written a number of books on Utah history, including *Utah, the Right Place*; *Mormonism in Transition*; *A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930*; *Mormons and Gentiles: A History of Salt Lake City with James B. Allen*; *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet*; *Line upon Line: Essays on Mormon Doctrine*; and *Grace and Grandeur: A History of Salt Lake City*. *The S.U.P. is privileged to have Tom Alexander's experience and knowledge in the national leadership for the next three years.* ▼



HIGH NOON *on the* ESCALANTE

Sunshine—
A deluge of blinding light
Poured down from polished skies;
Cliffs—
Rose-hued sky-scrappers with solid walls
Rising from a winding water-way;
Cottonwoods—
Tremulous canopies,
Magnificent in fresh May-green
Above warm sand of a siren shore;
Shadow—
Tender, cool, alluring—

Lavender and purple shot through
With emerald;
Winds—
Cool—capering on cliffs,
Careening through caves and caverns!

Shade,
Sunshine,
Sheer indolence—
Time?—Eternity
Creeping past on snail feet,
At high noon on the Escalante.

by Harrison R. Merrill,
Dusk on the Desert: A Memorial Volume
of the Writings of Harrison R. Merrill
(Utah Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters,
Provo, Utah, 1939), 52
Photo by <http://timdcy.wordpress.com>